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VISAYAN FOLK-TALES. II.

THE ENCHANTED RING.

THERE was once a king who had suffered for a long time with a painful disease, in spite of all the efforts of the doctors to cure it. At last he caused a proclamation to be made that whoever could cure him should marry his daughter as a reward.

One day a snake appeared before the king and asked permission to cure him. The king at first refused, but the snake said that his body contained some gall whose power to cure was wonderful, so the king consented to try it, and was soon cured.

The snake was really a prince who had been changed into this form by enchantment. Every night he took on his proper form and went for a walk around the city. His wife once saw him do this, so she asked him to tell her the truth. The snake told her his secret, but forbade her to tell any one, on pain of his leaving her.

One day the other daughters of the king consulted as to how they should find out the truth about their sister's husband. They took their sister into the garden and asked her many questions, but Maria kept silent about the snake's secret. So her sisters fastened her to a tree at the bottom of which was an ant's nest. Maria could not long endure the pain of the bites of the ants and told her sisters the truth. They let her go back home, but she could not find her husband anywhere, and set out to look for him. She asked the birds she met if they had seen him, but they answered that they had flown over all the country around, for hundreds of miles, without seeing him. She was very sorrowful, and at last, worn out with grief and weariness, lay down to sleep under a tree which was barren of leaves, except for three large ones at the very top.

Maria dreamed that her husband was in a house not far away and was dangerously ill. She dreamed, also, that the leaves on the top of the tree under which she was sleeping were the only cure for his sickness. As soon as she awoke, she climbed the tree and got the leaves and took them with her to the house, where she found her husband, just as she had dreamed.

When she came to the door of the house she met a black woman whom she asked about Don Juan, which was the prince's name. The black woman told her that he was sick, and asked her why she had come. Maria replied that she had learned of his sickness and had come to cure him with some leaves. As soon as the negress learned about the leaves, she took them and gave them to the prince, who immediately recovered from his sickness.

The prince had promised to marry any woman who could cure him, and as the black woman had cured him he married her. The negress, seeing that she was ugly, tried to make Maria so also, so she took her as a servant and painted her black; but Maria had an enchanted ring which gave her the power of changing her form. Every night in her room Maria made use of her ring, obtaining by means of it her maids of honor, fine dresses, and a band which played sweet music.

It chanced one night that Don Juan was awakened by the sound of music. He traced it to a certain room, and looking through the key-hole, saw all that was going on in Maria's room. He was greatly astonished and stood watching for a long time. Suddenly he saw Maria take from her ring a pair of scissors. These at a sign suspended themselves in the air, ready, when Maria should give the signal, to fall and pierce her heart. Don Juan rushed into the room and caught the scissors just as they were falling.

Then Maria told him all that had happened to her. She was proclaimed as the prince's true wife, and the black woman was put to death as a punishment for her deception.

THE ENCHANTED SHELL.

In the olden time there lived a man and his wife who had no son. They prayed that they might have a son, even if he were only like a little shell. When their son was born, he was very small, and just like a shell, so he was named Shell.

One day Shell asked permission of his mother to go and get some food. His mother at first would not let him, as she was afraid he would meet some animal which would kill him; but at last she consented, and he set out.

He went to the river, where some women were catching fish and putting them into baskets. One of them laid her basket on the grass near the river and Shell crept into it. In a few minutes the woman picked up her basket and started for home. All at once Shell began to cry "Rain! Rain!" The woman was so frightened at hearing the fishes talk, as she supposed, that she threw down her basket and ran away. Then Shell took the basket full of fish to his mother.

The next day Shell went out again. He saw an old man walking along the road and carrying the head of a cow, so he followed him. The old

man went into the house of a friend, leaving the cow's head hanging on the fence. Shell climbed up the fence and got into the cow's ear, keeping very quiet. When the old man came out of the house he took the head and continued his walk. As he reached a desert place called Cahana-an, the head began to say: "Ay! Ay!" The old man became so frightened that he threw the head away, and Shell carried it home.

Days passed. Shell told his mother that he was in love with a beautiful daughter of the chief and must have her for his wife. The poor mother was amazed and did not want to present his request to the chief. "My dear Shell," she said, "you are beside yourself." But he urged her and urged her, until at last she went. She begged the chief's pardon for her boldness and made known her errand. The chief was astonished, but agreed to ask his daughter if she were willing to take Shell for a husband. Much to his surprise and anger she stated that she was willing to marry him. Her father was so enraged that he exclaimed: "I consider you as being lower than my servants. If you marry this Shell I will drive you out of the village." But Shell and the girl were married, and escaped from the town to a little house in the fields, where they lived in great sorrow for a week. But at the end of that time, one night at midnight, the shell began to turn into a good-looking man, for he had been enchanted at his birth by an evil spirit. When his wife saw how handsome he was, she was very glad, and afterwards the chief received them back into his favor.

THE THREE BROTHERS.

Once upon a time there was a great king who had three sons. The oldest was named Pedro, the next Pablo, and the youngest Juan. One day their father called them to him, and giving each one a small sum of money, said: "Go and seek for yourselves wives, for I am getting old and wish to see you settled down before I die. The one who gets the most beautiful wife shall have the kingdom. In addition to the money I have given you, you may each have a horse from my stables."

Pedro and Pablo rushed off and secured the best horses, so that when Juan, who had stopped to thank his father, arrived at the stable, he found only an old horse, scarcely able to walk. However, he determined to set out; but after getting a mile or so from home, he saw that it was impossible to go farther, so sat down on a well-curb and wept bitterly. While he was weeping, a frog floated to the top of the water and asked what the matter was, and Juan told him all about his trouble. The frog said: "Never mind. Go to sleep for an hour and I will look for a wife for you."

At the end of the hour the frog awoke Juan and said: "Go home now, and tell your father that you have found a wife." Juan did so, and found his brothers at home, each claiming to have found a wife.

Their father said: "I wish to test your wives. Here are three handkerchiefs. Each of you must take one of them to his bride and have it embroidered." They took the handkerchiefs and departed; but Juan, when he had arrived at the well, sat down as before and wept, because he thought that now he would surely be found out.

The frog floated again to the surface of the well and asked Juan what the matter was. Juan replied, "I told my father that I had found a wife, as you bade me, and now he wishes to test my wife, to see if she is a suitable mate for me, and has sent me with this handkerchief for her to embroider. I do not know what to do, for now my father will surely find out that I have deceived him, and I shall be disgraced." The frog said: "Do not worry. Give me your handkerchief and go to sleep for an hour and I will have it embroidered for you." At the end of the hour the frog brought to Juan the handkerchief, all beautifully embroidered. When Juan arrived at home, he found his brothers there, each with his handkerchief beautifully embroidered, but Juan's handkerchief was embroidered the most beautifully of all.

Then their father said: "Your wives, evidently, can embroider well, but I must see how they can cook. Here are three cows. Each of you must take one of them and have your wife cook it." The brothers went off with the cows, but Juan led his cow to the well in which the frog lived, and, as before, sat down and began to weep. After a while the frog came to the top of the water and asked: "Why are you weeping so bitterly?" "Oh, my dear frog! Here is a cow which my father says my wife must cook. What shall I do?" The frog replied: "Go to sleep for an hour and I will cook the meat for you." Juan went to sleep, and at the end of the hour the frog woke him, and showing him the cow cooked whole, said: "Take this home and when you have carried it upstairs, break off one horn and see what will happen." Juan took the roast cow home, and when he arrived there found his brothers before him, with their meat roasted. Juan carried his cow upstairs and each animal was placed upon a table by itself. The king tasted Pedro's meat, and found it too salt. Then he tried Pablo's, and found it not salt enough. When he approached the table on which Juan's meat was laid, Juan broke off one of the cow's horns, and immediately a beautiful service of silver dishes, enough for twelve persons, rolled out, each dish taking its proper place upon the table, with the roast cow in the midst. Then the king and his councillors sat down to the feast, and when they had tasted the meat, they found it just right.

On the next day the king ordered his sons to bring their wives to the palace, so that he might decide which was the most beautiful. Juan was in more trouble than ever, for now he was sure of being discovered; so he went to the well again, weeping bitterly and calling aloud for the frog. In a few minutes the frog appeared, and to him Juan related his

trouble. The frog said: "Under that tree is a hammock; go to sleep in it for an hour, and three women will wake you by shaking the hammock. Take the middle one and return home, for that one is to be your wife." All happened as the frog had said. Juan took the woman home with him, and as he approached the house, his father was looking out of the window. When the king saw how beautiful Juan's wife was, he was so overcome with joy that he fainted. When he had recovered, he declared Juan's wife was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. So to Juan was given the kingdom. Pedro became the palace coachman, and Pablo the cook.

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BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THE DATTO SOMACUEL.

I.

Datto Somacuel was one of the seven chiefs who, coming from Borneo many years before the Spaniards conquered these islands, settled the Island of Panay. He lived in Sinaragan, a town near San Joaquin, in the southern part of Iloilo Province. His wife's name was Capinangan.

Somacuel went every morning to the seashore to watch his slaves fish with the sinchoro, or net. One day they caught many fishes, and Somacuel commanded them:—

"Spread the fish to dry, and take care that the crows do not eat them up."

A slave answered: "Sir, if your treasure inside the house is stolen by the crows, how do you expect those out of doors to be kept safe?" This was said with a certain intonation that made Somacuel conjecture that there was a hidden meaning in it.

"What do you mean by that?" he asked.

"Sir, I have to inform you of something that I should have told you long ago. Do not reprove me if I have been backward in telling you of the injury done you by your wife. It was due to my desire to get complete proofs of the truth of my statement."

"End at once your tedious narrative!" said the datto, "What did my wife do?"

"Sir," answered the slave, "she deceives you shamefully. She loves Gorong-Gorong, who is at this very moment in your house jesting at your absence."

"Alas!" said Somacuel, "if this be true he shall pay well for his boldness."

The chief hurried home, intending to surprise the offenders. He carried a fish called ampahan in a bamboo tube full of water, going around by a secret way, so as not to be seen. On reaching home he

went up into the attic to observe what was going on, and found that his informant had told the truth.

Gorong-Gorong and Capinangan were engaged in an affectionate dialogue. Involuntarily Somacuel spilled some of the water down, and, fearing that he would be discovered, seized a spear that was hidden in the attic and, dropping it down, dexterously ran Gorong-Gorong through the body, killing him instantly.

"Oh, Diva!" exclaimed Capinangan, kneeling beside the inert corpse, "How shall I be able to take it away without being discovered by Somacuel?"

Somacuel, who had not been seen at all, stayed quietly above, watching what Capinangan would do. Capinangan did not suspect that her husband was there, as he usually did not come home before nightfall. She tried to take the corpse out for burial, but could not carry the heavy body of her unfortunate lover. She must conceal it in some way, and it was dangerous for her to call for aid, lest she might be betrayed to her husband. So she took a knife and cut the body into pieces so that she could take them out and bury them under the house.

After this task was done she managed to wash the blood up. She became tranquil for a moment, believing she would never be discovered. Somacuel, however, had observed all, and he formed a plan for punishing his wife as she deserved. When everything seemed to be calm he crept down, doing his best not to be seen. At the door he called his wife by name. Capinangan was afraid, but concealed her fear with a smile. "Capinangan," said her husband, "cut this fish in pieces and cook it for me."

Capinangan was astonished at this command, because she had never before been treated in this way. They had many slaves to perform such tasks.

"You know I cannot," she said.

"Why not?" asked her husband.

"Because I have never learned how to cut a fish in pieces nor to cook it," she replied.

"I am astonished that you don't know how to cut, after seeing that cutting is your favorite occupation," said Somacuel.

Capinangan then did not doubt that her husband knew what she had done, so she did as he had bidden.

When dinner was ready the husband and wife ate it, but without speaking to each other. After the meal, Somacuel told his wife that he had seen all and should punish her severely. Capinangan said nothing. A guilty person has no argument with which to defend himself. Somacuel ordered his servants to throw Capinangan into the sea. At that time the chief's will was law. Neither pleadings nor tears softened his hard heart, and Capinangan was carried down to the sea and thrown in.

II.

Time passed by; Somacuel each day grew sadder and gloomier. He would have been willing now to forgive his wife, but it was too late.

He said to his slaves: "Prepare a banca for me, that I may sail from place to place to amuse myself."

So one pleasant morning a banca sailed from Sinaragan, going southward. Somacuel did not intend to go to any definite place, but drifted at the mercy of wind and current. He amused himself by singing during the voyage.

One day the crew descried land at a distance. "Sir," they said, "that land is Cagayan. Let us go there to get oysters and crane's eggs." To this their master agreed, and upon anchoring off the coast he prepared to visit the place.

Oh, what astonishment he felt, as he saw, peeping out of the window of a house, a woman whose appearance resembled in great measure that of Capinangan! He would have run to embrace her, had he not remembered that Capinangan was dead. He was informed that the woman was named Aloyan. He began to pay court to her, and in a few weeks she became his wife.

Somacuel was happy, for his wife was very affectionate. Aloyan, on her part, did not doubt that her husband loved her sincerely, so she said to him: —

"My dear Somacuel, I will no longer deceive you. I am the very woman whom you caused to be thrown into the sea. I am Capinangan. I clung to a log in the water and was carried to this place, where I have lived ever since."

"Oh," said Somacuel, "pardon me for the harshness with which I meant to punish you."

"Let us forget what is passed," said Capinangan. "I deserved it, after all."

So they returned to Sinaragan, where they lived together happily for many years.

MAGBOLOTÓ.

There was once a man named Magbolotó who lived in the depths of the mountains. One day on going down to a brook he saw three goddesses bathing in the water. They had left their wings on the bank, and Magbolotó managed to slip down and steal one pair of them. When the goddesses had finished bathing and looked for their wings, they could not find those belonging to the youngest, Macaya. At last the two goddesses put on their wings and flew up to heaven, leaving behind them Macaya, who wept bitterly, since without her wings she could not go home. Then Magbolotó, feigning to have come from a distance, met her and asked: "Why do you weep, lady?"

"Why do you ask, if you will not help me in my trouble?" answered Macaya.

"I will do my best to help you," said Magbolotó, "if you will tell me about it."

So Macaya told him that she had lost her wings, and therefore could not return to her home in heaven.

"I am sorry not to be able to help you out of your trouble," said Magbolotó, "but we terrestrial people do not use wings, nor know where to get them. The only thing I can do for you is to offer you a home with me." Macaya was obliged to accept his offer, since there was nothing else for her to do.

About a year after Macaya became Magbolotó's wife they had a child. One day, as Magbolotó was making rice soup on the hearth, Macaya was swinging the child in a hammock. Accidentally, she noticed a bundle stuck into one of the bamboo posts in the partition. She withdrew the bundle, and upon unrolling it found, oh, joy! her long-lost wings, which Magbolotó had hidden in the hollow bamboo. She at once put them on, and leaving her husband and child, flew up to join her celestial family.

Magbolotó, on missing his wife, began calling loudly for her. As he could not find her, he looked for the wings, and seeing that they were gone, knew at once what had happened. He began to weep bitterly, especially as he did not know how to take care of the child. So leaving it in the care of a relative, he set out to find the way to heaven.

He had walked a great distance when he met North Wind.

"Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?" asked North Wind.

"Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me in any way," answered Magbolotó.

"Tell me your trouble and I will help you," said North Wind.

"Well," replied Magbolotó, "I have a wife who came from heaven. But now she has flown away, leaving a little child for me to take care of, and I am in great sorrow. Please show me the way that leads to her home."

"Magbolotó," said North Wind, "I do not know the way, but my brother, East Wind, can tell you. Good-by."

Magbolotó went on his way, and after a while he met East Wind.

"Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?" asked East Wind.

"Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me in any way," said Magbolotó.

"Tell me all your trouble and I will help you," answered East Wind.

Then Magbolotó related all his sorrow, just as he had done to North Wind.

"Well," said East Wind, "I do not know the way, but my brother, South Wind, may be able to show it to you. Good-by."

Magbolotó went on, and at last met South Wind.

"Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?" asked South Wind.

"Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me in any way," said Magbolotó.

"Tell me your trouble and I will help you," answered South Wind.

Then Magbolotó told him his story, just as he had done to North Wind and East Wind.

"Well," said South Wind, "I do not know the way to heaven, but my brother, West Wind, can tell you the course to be taken to get there. Good-by."

Magbolotó went on and on, and at last met West Wind.

"Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?" asked West Wind.

"Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me in any way," answered Magbolotó.

"Tell me your trouble and I will help you," answered West Wind, and Magbolotó did as he was bidden.

"Magbolotó," said West Wind, "I don't know the way to heaven, but my friend, Mr. Eagle, does. Good-by."

Magbolotó went on until he met Mr. Eagle.

"Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?" asked Mr. Eagle.

"Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me in any way," answered Magbolotó.

"Tell me your trouble and I will help you," replied Mr. Eagle. Then Magbolotó told Mr. Eagle his trouble.

"Magbolotó," said Mr. Eagle, "get upon my back and I will carry you to your wife's home."

Magbolotó climbed upon Mr. Eagle's back and they flew up until they reached Macaya's house. Then Magbolotó requested Macaya's grandmother, with whom she lived, to let her granddaughter return to earth with him.

"By no means," said the grandmother, "unless you will spread ten jars of luñga (a certain very small grain) out to dry and gather them again in the evening."

So Magbolotó spread the jars of luñga on the sand, and at noon began to gather them up; but sunset had come before he had gathered more than five handfuls, so he sat down and began to cry like a little boy. The king of the ants heard him, and wishing to help him, asked:—

"Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?"

"Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me."

"Tell me about it and I will help you."

So Magbolotó told the king of the ants all his history, and the condition imposed by the grandmother before he could have his wife, and how impossible it was to fulfil it.

"Well, Magbolotó, you shall be helped," said the king of the ants.

Then he blew his horn, and in a little while all his subjects came, and began picking up the grain and putting it into the jars. In a few moments all the grain was in the jars.

The next morning Magbolotó went to get his wife, but the grandmother stopped him, saying:—

“You shall not take my granddaughter away until you have first hulled a hundred bushels of rice.”

Magbolotó was in despair, for he knew that to hull one hundred bushels of rice would take him not less than one hundred days, and the grandmother required him to do it in one day; so he cried like a child at his misfortune. The king of the rats heard him crying, and at once came to help him.

“Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?” asked King Rat.

“Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me.”

“Relate the matter, and I will.”

Magbolotó told him his trouble. Then the king of the rats called his subjects together and ordered them to gnaw the hulls from the rice. In an instant the rice was all hulled.

The next morning Magbolotó made ready to depart with his wife, but the grandmother stopped him again, saying:—

“You may not go until you have chopped down all the trees you see on that mountain over there.”

There were more than a million trees, so Magbolotó was in great trouble, and as usual he began to weep.

The king of the wild boars heard him and came up, saying:—

“Magbolotó, Magbolotó, why are you weeping?”

“Ask me nothing, if you cannot help me.”

“Relate the matter, and I will.”

Magbolotó related all that had happened to him. Then the king of the wild boars called all his subjects together and set them at work cutting down the trees with their tusks. In a few minutes the trees were all down.

When the grandmother saw that Magbolotó accomplished every task she gave him to do she became tired of trying to think of things for him to do; so she allowed him to depart with Macaya, and leaving the celestial abode they descended to their home on the earth, where they lived happily together for many years.

WHY DOGS WAG THEIR TAILS.

Once upon a time there lived in a certain pueblo a rich man who had a dog and a cat. His only daughter, of whom he was very fond, was studying in a convent in a city several miles distant and it was his custom, about once a week, to send the dog and cat to take her a little present. The dog was so old that he had lost all his teeth, and so

was unable to fight, but the cat was strong and very cunning, and so one could help the other, since the dog knew better how to find the way.

One day the rich man wished to send a magic ring to his daughter, so he called the dog and the cat to him. To the cat he said: "You are very cunning and prudent. You may carry this magic ring to my daughter, but be sure to take very great care of it." To the dog he said: "You are to go with the cat to take a magic ring to my daughter. Take care not to lose the way, and see that no one molests the cat." Both animals promised to do their best and set out immediately.

On the way they were obliged to cross a wide and deep river, over which there was no bridge, and as they were unable to find a boat, they determined to swim across it. The dog said to the cat: "Give me the magic ring." "Oh, no," replied the cat. "Did you not hear the master say just what each of us had to do?"

"Yes, but you are not very good at swimming, and may lose the ring, while I am strong and can take good care of it," answered the dog. The cat continued to refuse to disobey its master, until at last the dog threatened to kill it, and it was obliged to intrust the ring to the dog's keeping.

Then they began to swim across the river, which was so strong that they were about an hour in getting over, so that both became very tired and weak. Just before they came to the other side, the dog dropped the ring into the water, and it was impossible to find it. "Now," said the cat, "we had better go back home and tell our master that we have lost the ring." "Yes," answered the dog, "but I am very much afraid." So they turned back toward home, but as they drew near the house his fear so overcame him that he ran away and was never seen again.

The master was very much surprised to see the cat back so soon, and asked him, "Where is your companion?" The cat was at first afraid to answer. "Where is the dog?" asked the master again. "Oh, he ran away," replied the cat. "Ran away?" said the master. "What do you mean? Where is the ring?" "Oh, pardon me, my master," answered the cat. "Do not be angry, and I will tell you what has happened. When we reached the bank of the river, the dog asked me to give him the ring. This I refused many times, until at last he threatened to kill me if I did not give it to him, and I was obliged to do so. The river was very hard to cross, and on the way the dog dropped the ring into the water and we could not find it. I persuaded the dog to come back with me to tell you about it, but on the way he became so frightened that he ran away."

Then the master made a proclamation to the people, offering a reward to the one who should find his old dog and bring him to him. They could recognize the dog by his being old and having no teeth. The master also declared that when he had found the delinquent he would

punish him by cutting off his tail. He ordered that the dogs all around the world should take part in the search, and so ever since that time, when one dog meets another he always asks: "Are you the old dog who lost the magic ring? If you are, your tail must be cut off." Then instantly both show their teeth and wag their tails to mean no. Since that time, also, cats have been afraid of water, and will never swim across a river if it can be avoided.

THE EAGLE AND THE HEN.

One day the eagle declared his love for the hen. He flew down to search for her, and when he had found her he said: "I wish you to be my mate."

The hen answered: "I am willing, but let me first grow wings like yours, so I can fly as high as you." The eagle replied: "I will do so, and as a sign of our betrothal I will give you this ring. Take good care of it until I come again."

The hen promised to do so, and the eagle flew away.

The next day the cock met the hen. When he saw the ring around her neck he was very much surprised and said: "Where did you get that ring? I think you are not true to me. Do you not remember your promise to be my mate? Throw away that ring." So she did.

At the end of a week the eagle came with beautiful feathers to dress the hen. When she saw him she became frightened and hid behind the door. The eagle entered, crying: "How are you, my dear hen? I am bringing you a beautiful dress," and he showed it to the hen. "But where is your ring? Why do you not wear it?" The hen could not at first answer, but after a little she tried to deceive the eagle, and said: "Oh, pardon me, sir! Yesterday as I was walking in the garden I met a large snake, and I was so frightened that I ran towards the house. When I reached it I found that I had lost the ring, and I looked everywhere for it; but alas! I have not yet found it."

The eagle looked keenly at the hen and said: "I would never have believed that you would behave so badly. I promise you that, whenever you have found my ring, I will come down again and take you for my mate. As a punishment for breaking your promise you shall always scratch the ground and look for the ring, and all your chickens that I find I will snatch away from you. That is all. Good-by." Then he flew away.

And ever since, all the hens all over the world have been scratching to find the eagle's ring.

Note. — The bird of whom this story is told is the *dapay*, or *brahman kite*. It is larger than most of our hawks and is more like the eagle in appearance, although not very large.

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

Mr. Spider was once in love with Miss Fly. Several times he declared his love, but was always repelled, for Miss Fly disliked his business.

One day, when she saw him coming, she closed the doors and windows of her house and made ready a pot of boiling water.

Mr. Spider called to be allowed to enter the house, but Miss Fly's only answer was to throw the boiling water at him.

"Well!" cried Mr. Spider, "I and my descendants shall be avenged upon you and yours. We will never give you a moment's peace."

Mr. Spider did not break his word, for to this day we see his hatred of the fly.

THE BATTLE OF THE CRABS.

One day the land crabs had a meeting. One of them said: "What shall we do with the waves? They sing all the time so loudly that we cannot possibly sleep well at night." "Do you not think it would be well for all of us males to go down and fight them?" asked the eldest of the crabs. "Yes," all replied. "Well, to-morrow all the males must get ready to go."

The next day they started to go down to the sea. On the way they met the shrimp. "Where are you going, my friends?" asked the shrimp. The crabs answered: "We are going to fight the waves, because they will not let us sleep at night."

"I don't think you will win the battle," said the shrimp. "The waves are very strong, while your legs are so weak that your bodies bend almost to the ground when you walk," and he laughed. The crabs were so angry at his scorn that they ran at the shrimp and pinched him until he promised to help them in the battle.

When they reached the shore, the crabs looked at the shrimp and said: "Your face is turned the wrong way, friend shrimp," and they laughed at him, for crabs are much like other people, and think they are the only ones who are right. "Are you ready to fight with the waves? What weapon have you?"

"My weapon," replied the shrimp, "is a spear on my head." Just then he saw a large wave coming, and ran away; but the crabs, who were all looking towards the shore, did not see it, and were killed.

The wives of the dead crabs wondered why their husbands did not come home. They thought the battle must be a long one, and decided to go down and help their husbands. As they reached the shore and entered the water to look for their husbands, the waves killed them.

A short time afterwards, thousands of little crabs, such as are now called fiddlers, were found near the shore. When these children were old enough to walk, the shrimp often visited them and related to them

the sad fate of their parents. And so, if you will watch carefully the fiddlers, you will notice that they always seem ready to run back to the land, where their forefathers lived, and then, as they regain their courage, they rush down, as if about to fight the waves. But they always lack the courage to do so, and continually run back and forth. They live neither on dry land, as their ancestors did, nor in the sea, like the other crabs, but up on the beach, where the waves wash over them at high tide and try to dash them to pieces.

THE MEETING OF THE PLANTS.

Once upon a time plants were able to talk as well as people, and to walk from place to place. One day King Molave, the strongest tree, who lived on a high mountain, called his subjects together for a general meeting.

Then every tree put itself in motion towards the designated spot, each doing its best to reach it first. But the buri palm was several days late, which made the king angry, and he cursed it in these terms:—

“You must be punished for your negligence, and as king I pass upon you this sentence: You shall never see your descendants, for you shall die just as your seeds are ready to grow.”

And from that day the buri palms have always died without seeing their descendants.

WHO BRINGS THE CHOLERA?

The Filipinos, being for the most part ignorant of the laws of hygiene, attribute the cholera to any cause rather than the right one. In general, they believe it to be caused by some evil-minded men, who poison the wells, or, sometimes, by evil spirits, as the following story will show.

Tanag was a poor man who lived in a town in the interior of one of the Philippine Islands. He had nothing to eat, nor could he find any work by which he might earn his food, and so he determined to emigrate. At that time the cholera was at its height.

As Tanag was rather old, he walked so slowly that in a day he had gone but three miles. At sunset he was crossing a sheltered bridge over a smooth brook near the sea, and determined to rest and spend the night there.

During the early part of the night he was all right, but later it occurred to him that he might be seen and killed by the *ladrones*, who often passed that way.

Below the bridge was a raft of bamboo poles, and he thought it would be wise to get down there, where he could not so easily be seen. But there were many mosquitoes over the water, so that he was unable to sleep. He determined, however, to stay there until day dawned.

At about four o'clock he heard a heavy step upon the floor of the bridge, and by the moonlight he could see that the new-comer was a huge giant with a long club.

A little later another giant came, and Tanag, full of fear, heard the following dialogue:—

“Did you kill many people?”

“Yes, I put my poison on the food, and in a short time those who ate of it were attacked by the cholera and died. And how are you getting along yourself?”

“At first I killed many people with my poison, but now I am disappointed, because they have found out the antidote for it.”

“What is that?”

“The root of the balingay tree boiled in water. It is a powerful antidote against the poison I use. And what is the antidote against yours?”

“Simply the root of the alibutbut tree boiled in water. Luckily, no one has discovered this antidote, and so many people will die.”

In the morning Tanag saw the giants going to the shore, where many people were fishing with their nets. The giants flung their poison on the fish, and then disappeared from Tanag's sight.

Tanag believed that the cholera was caused by the two giants, who poisoned the food and water by sprinkling poison on them, and he did not doubt that the roots of the balingay and alibutbut trees would prove to be the antidotes to the poison. So he gathered the roots and cooked them and advertised himself as a doctor.

In fact he cured many people and earned so much money that he soon became rich.

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